

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SD Guard receives Army Communities of Excellence Award

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The South Dakota Army National Guard received a second place, honorable mention finish in the bronze category for the 2014 Army Communities of Excellence Awards. The SDARNG placed 12th overall among 31 applicants in the Army National Guard.

The ACOE Awards follow a 12-month evaluation in which U.S. Army, National Guard and Reserve installations are scored using the Malcolm Baldrige criteria for performance excellence. Participants are not judged against each other, but scored on how well they can demonstrate the maturity of key organizational processes and their ability to show results in key areas.

“It was quite a privilege to share the stage with leaders who are representing the best National Guard organizations in the nation,” said Lt. Col. Orson Ward, deputy Directorate of Plans for the SDARNG, of receiving the award on behalf of the SDNG during the ACOE Awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., Aug. 22.

The assessment considers how senior leaders lead, how the SDARNG focuses on the future needs of its customers, how it creates knowledge to improve performance and learning, how it develops and guides its workforce to improve operational effectiveness and deliver the most value to its customers.

“We have a great organization, but we need to continuously ask, ‘How good are we, are we getting better, and how do we know?’” said Ward.

By using criteria established for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award as a framework for performance assessment, the ACOE program helps participating Army installations/communities focus on providing excellence in facilities and services in support of Soldiers, their families and civilians.

Baldrige-based performance assessments provide opportunities to identify best practices in installation management and reveal potential opportunities to apply appropriate performance improvement tools.

“This year’s award was a result of the hard work and commitment from last year’s writing team. We are lucky to have this quality of professionalism in our organization,” said Ward. “The award is great, but the true value of implementing the Baldrige criteria is the journey it provides to achieve excellence in how we do what we do here in the South Dakota National Guard.”



140822-A-TL267-001: Lt. Col. Orson Ward, right, deputy Directorate of Plans for the South Dakota Army National Guard, accepts an Army Communities of Excellence Awards for 2014 from Brig. Gen. Walter “Emery” Fountain, special assistant to the acting director Army National Guard, during an awards presentation in Washington, D.C., Aug. 22, 2014. The SDARNG received a second place, honorable mention finish in the bronze category and placed 12th overall among 31 applicants in the Army National Guard. The ACOE is an Army-wide annual award program that assesses all components and dimensions of installation management, and is based on the principle that communities support people best by combining excellent services with excellent facilities in a quality environment. (Courtesy Photo/Released)

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